

Supervisor Mark Lesko and Town Officials Celebrate Earth Week in Brookhaven Town

posted on 4/27/2011 12:44:27 PM



Pictured left to right, applying the finishing touch during the Tree Planting Ceremony at Town Hall are Tax Receiver Lou Marcoccia, Councilwoman Connie Kepert, Deputy Supervisor / Councilwoman Kathleen Walsh and Supervisor Mark Lesko.

Farmingville, NY - On Wednesday, April 20, Supervisor Mark Lesko joined Town elected officials and employees in front of Town Hall to plant a Kwanzan Cherry Tree in celebration of Earth Week.

Supervisor Lesko said, "This tree is symbolic of our commitment to protect the environment of Brookhaven Town. For more than 40 years, Earth Day has served to remind us that we live on an ecologically diverse and sensitive island and that we must do whatever we can to preserve it for future generations."

"Earth Day is a great day to do something nice for the mother of us all. Whether that be planting a tree or working on important environmental issues such as global warming, it is a day meant to remember our dependence and connection to the natural world around us. So for the rest of the week do something nice for the earth; walk or ride a bike instead of taking the car, or, plant a tree," said Councilwoman Connie Kepert.

"Planting a new tree at Town Hall is a great way to celebrate Earth Week in Brookhaven," said Councilman Tim Mazzei. "It reminds us that our planet is really a fragile place and we must take care to protect and preserve it."



Supervisor Lesko with Great Brookhaven Clean up volunteers in Mastic.



Supervisor Lesko with young volunteers in Patchogue.

The Supervisor also recognized the success of last weekend's Fourth Annual Great Brookhaven Clean-up by presenting a certificate of appreciation to the Town's Waste Management staff for organizing and coordinating the clean-up efforts of more than 5000 volunteers.

"I commend our staff for making the Great Brookhaven Clean-up such a success," said Supervisor Lesko. "Their efforts and the work of all the volunteers who took part in the Great Brookhaven Clean-up have helped to make the Town a cleaner and more beautiful place to live." Those who participated in the town wide event picked up litter, cleaned up parks, beautified and cleaned miles of roadways, rivers, lakes, and shoreline all across Brookhaven.

"I am so proud to participate in Earth Week. Thank you to the thousands of volunteers who participated in improving the quality of life for all of us in Brookhaven Town," said Deputy Supervisor / Councilwoman Kathleen Walsh.



Councilman Dan Panico (left) with Great Brookhaven Clean-up volunteers at the Forge River in Mastic.



Councilwoman Jane Bonner (back row right) with Great Brookhaven Clean-up volunteers from the Mt. Sinai Harbor Advisory Committee.

"Every year the clean-up effort is a fantastic success that truly brings out the best in people," commented

Brookhaven Town Councilman Dan Panico. "Across the Town volunteers worked shoulder to shoulder to help clean up the communities in which we live. I thank everyone for their efforts and while I look forward to next year, keeping Brookhaven clean is an effort to which we can all contribute on a daily basis."

"The volunteers who came out on a chilly day to take part in the Great Brookhaven Clean-up deserve a lot of credit," said Councilwoman Jane Bonner. "I admire their enthusiasm, energy and commitment to help save the planet for future generations."



Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld with are Jeff Weissman, Scoutmaster and Boy Scouts from Troop 377 and Volunteers cleaning trash along Nicolls Road.



Councilwoman Kepert with Brian Heinrichs and Cub Scouts from Pack 79 at Willow Lake in Yaphank.



Deputy Supervisor / Councilwoman Kathleen Walsh with Curby and volunteers at the Centereach Park Ballfields.

"Litter appears as a constant problem in our suburban landscape everyday and that is why several years ago I proposed that the Town join the "Keep America Beautiful" organization and tap into their nation-wide volunteer and education program experience. Over the last four years we have had approximately 15,000 - 20,000 volunteers participate in the Great Brookhaven Clean Up. I am proud to be a sponsor of the program and will continue to participate every year with my family."

The Town of Brookhaven also recently received good news about its recycling rates in time for Earth Week. The Town launched a public information campaign at the beginning of 2011 to highlight the benefits of household recycling. As a result, in the first quarter of 2011 the Town's household recycling rate increased by almost 10% - this means that the percent of the waste stream that is recycled went from 11.4% in 2010 to 12.5% in 2011.

"As a Town we can recycle more and I'm glad everyone is doing their part to go green," remarked Supervisor Lesko. The Town's goal is to increase the percent of the waste stream that is recycled by 5% over the entire year.

Tax Receiver Lou Marcoccia said, "There is no greater environmentally and fiscally sound way to protect our environment and precious natural resources than by recycling. I commend the good citizens of Brookhaven for demonstrating leadership in their commitment to our environment by increasing recycle rates. While much work still needs to be done, Earth Day reminds us all that we are temporary stewards of our environment and must be ever vigilant in protecting it for our children and grandchildren."

Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water. If a plastic bottle is thrown away instead of recycled, it takes 500 years for that bottle to break down. Recycling saves energy, conserves natural resources and water, reduces emissions of greenhouse gases, and limits the amount of garbage going into the landfill. In addition, if the Town reaches its goal of increasing recycling by 5%, the Town would save \$1 million in disposal costs and realize \$500,000 from the sale of recyclables.

The Town also launched a new webpage that enables residents to track their collection district's recycling rates, which will be updated quarterly. Residents can go to www.brookhaven.org/recycle and find out if their collection

district is an above-average or below-average recycler compared to the rest of the Town by clicking on their school district and then their collection district.

The Town will also soon be rolling out the Recycle Bank program, which offers incentives to residents such as discounts at local stores if they increase recycling.

The Town of Brookhaven also remains committed to preserving open space and Brookhaven's environment. Over the course of 2010, the Town of Brookhaven preserved over 140 acres of open space and farmland development rights and over 200 acres are currently in contract for purchase. The Town Board will also be continuing to receive public comments on the Carmans River Watershed Protection Plan, which was drafted by the Carmans River Study Group to protect the Carmans River in perpetuity.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone (631) 451-6595 • Fax (631) 451-6258